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# Foods from the freezer : precooked and prepared

FAITH FENTON

**F**ROZEN precooked or prepared foods such as soups, stews, fruit purées, vegetable purées, pies, cakes, and sandwiches in the home freezer can be a great convenience. They are good for busy days when you must prepare meals in a hurry, or for occasions when unexpected company calls, or in the morning when you have lunches to put up before the youngsters go off to school. With frozen prepared foods you can shorten last-minute preparation for teas, buffets, and picnics.

Before you fill up your freezer with prepared foods, however, you will want to decide whether they will save you time when you need it. Some foods take more time to get ready for serving after they are frozen than they do when mixed up fresh and cooked or baked. Some frozen foods use more heat than freshly prepared dishes and so are less economical.

There are, however, many frozen dishes that are excellent when properly prepared and handled. Of course, you will want to decide for yourself which foods are practical for freezing in your home.

## Foods Good for Freezing

Prepared foods that are good for freezing include foods that: (1) are seasonal, or (2) take a long time to prepare or to cook, or (3) use a large variety of ingredients, or (4) require a certain skill and care in preparation, or (5) require only a little more work to prepare in quantity than in small amounts, or (6) need only slight thawing before they are served, or (7) need little time and attention once they have been taken from the freezer, or (8) are good after a reasonable storage period. Certain leftovers may also be frozen.

## General Suggestions

1. Choose only foods of high quality.
2. Choose foods just at the right stage for eating.
3. Observe directions carefully to be sure the amounts and kinds of ingredients are right for frozen baked foods.
4. Be sure that the water you use is pure; that your equipment and



tables are as clean as you can make them; that your hands are thoroughly clean before you handle and package the food.

5. Sterilize glass freezer jars, tin cans, or aluminum cartons before you use them.

6. Handle food carefully when you take it out of one container and put it into another. Transfer foods from one container to another as little as possible to minimize chances of

contamination and mashing the food.

7. Work rapidly. Speed in handling is necessary at all stages to insure "good eating" and freedom from bacteria.

8. Do not overcook since freezing softens foods, and any reheating will soften them further.

9. Cool cooked foods quickly by setting the containers in ice water or in running cold water.

10. Package carefully according to directions.

11. Freeze foods immediately and quickly.

12. Plan to use frozen cooked foods within the time they will store safely. See table on page 9.

13. Reheat frozen cooked foods according to directions.

### **Off-Flavors**

To prevent off-flavors, keep in mind the following:

1. Pepper, onion, cloves, and synthetic vanilla may become strong and bitter during the period that foods are stored in the freezer; salt loses flavor. You may want to add some flavorings and seasonings to taste at the time of serving.

2. When seals are incomplete or broken, stored foods may take on off-flavors from the equipment or from other foods in the freezer.

3. Poor packaging materials may impart an off-flavor to foods.

4. Some off-flavors are due to chemical changes in the food. Rancidity is due to a chemical change that takes place when the oxygen in the air reacts with fat or oils. Some foods which contain only traces of fat, such as peas, will acquire off-flavors if the fat present becomes rancid.

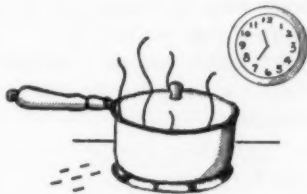
### **Color Changes**

To prevent a change in color of foods that are red, white, or yellow, add an acid food—such as orange or lemon juice, sour cream, or acid milk wheys—when you can do so without spoiling the flavor.

## Consistency Changes

Freezing changes the texture of some foods:

*Hard-cooked egg white* becomes tough and *raw vegetables* lose their crispness when frozen. *Fried foods* also lose their crispness and often become soggy. Any foods which contain fat even in small amounts are likely to become rancid in long storage. *Mayonnaise* separates during freezing and thawing. *Sauces* also tend to separate especially when made with a large proportion of fat or with homogenized milk. You can often prevent separation if you beat sauces in an electric mixer, set at high speed, just before you freeze them. Or you can often beat them to a smooth consistency during or after reheating. Cheese tends to give them a rough texture, but the use of eggs in a cheese sauce helps to offset this tendency.



Saving out about one-fourth of the flour or starch called for in a recipe and adding it as a paste to the chilled sauce just before packaging may prevent separation of the sauce. The cooking of the sauce during reheating seems to be sufficient to prevent any taste of raw starch in the finished product.

Rice flour made from a variety of rice grown in California has been found to produce sauces which remain smooth during storage and thawing.

## Prepared or Baked

In deciding whether to freeze a food before or after baking, consider not only the quality of the finished product but also the economy of time and fuel.

## Containers and Wrapping Materials

Suitable containers and wrappings include oblong metal foil containers; glass freezer jars; cylindrical waxed containers; round nesting waxed cups; square or oblong waxed cartons; plastic containers; bag-in-box types; moisture-proof cellophane; pliofilm; polyethylene; plastic bags; and metal foil. Foils are good for wrapping single items—such as one doughnut or one ear of corn.

On the market now are shallow metal containers in which you can cook and freeze food rapidly, store it, and reheat it quickly—all in the one container. These containers come with covers.

Glass freezer-jars have certain advantages: (1) They can be completely sealed; (2) They do not impart flavors or odors to the food; (3) They

protect the food from flavors or odors of other foods in the freezer. The disadvantage of glass jars is that they take up more room in the freezer-cabinet than do square or oblong packages, and also freeze more slowly.

Glass freezer-jars are wider at the mouth than at the bottom so the food does not require thawing before it can be removed from the jar.

### How to Package

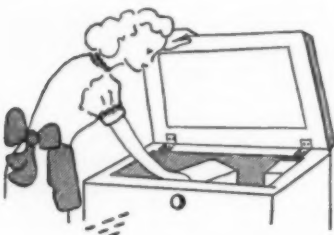
Although most prepared or precooked foods are frozen after packaging, some may be frozen and then packaged. Pies, for example, are easier to wrap if they are frozen.

1. Use a properly treated paper for wrapping so that you will not have to wrap in too many thicknesses. Thick paper prevents rapid freezing.

2. Package food in small containers to permit quick freezing and later quick thawing.

3. To prevent delicate foods from being mashed in the freezer, place them in sturdy packages.

4. Put into one package only as much food as you intend to serve at one time. Many foods gradually lose quality on standing. It is advisable not to refreeze food once it has been thawed. It is usually better if thawed food is not even reheated a second time.



5. Make a solid pack and keep out as much air as possible.

6. In filling packages with soft foods, such as creamed chicken, place two pieces of cellophane every inch or so throughout the package. This method speeds up reheating and is particularly satisfactory for foods that are likely to become gummy or broken up upon stirring and reheating.

7. For liquid foods allow space at the top for the food to expand.

8. Large cuts of cooked meat, such as roasts and poultry, frozen whole, and sliced just before serving, usually taste fresher and are more moist than are thinner pieces of meat that have been cut up before packaging. If you prefer the smaller pieces, however, you can store them longer by making the pack solid and by covering the pieces with a sauce or gravy.

9. Draw wrapping materials tightly around the food.

10. Date each package as well as label it. The storage life of some prepared foods is short.

11. Individual dishes may be frozen separately and then packaged together to make a meal.



## How to Label the Packages

Label and store foods systematically for convenience in use later. To show how many and what kinds of foods are in the locker and their age, keep an inventory posted nearby: (1) List the kind, amount, any special treatment, and the date you placed the food in the locker; (2) when you remove any food, check it off the list; (3) record the length of storage and the quality of the food. Such information may help you to get better results the year following.

## Freezing Temperature for Foods

Zero degrees F. is the highest storage temperature that is advisable for frozen cooked or prepared foods. Most directions state, "Freeze at 0°F. or lower." Studies show that cottoniness in frozen cooked potatoes and

Approximate Storage Life of Some Frozen Cooked and Prepared Foods

Food	Approximate maximum storage life*
	<i>Months</i>
Soups.....	6 to 9
Vegetables, puréed.....	6 to 9
shredded.....	6 to 9
Meats, roast	
pork.....	1 to 3
beef.....	4 to 6
Poultry, roast.....	4 to 6
Salads with solid base.....	4 to 6
Sandwiches.....	1 to 3
Fruit, sauce.....	8 to 10
purée.....	8 to 10
juice.....	8 to 10
Rolls, yeast, baked.....	12
half-baked.....	12
unbaked.....	½
Biscuits, baked.....	2
unbaked.....	½
Muffins, baked.....	2
unbaked.....	½
Cakes, shortened, baked.....	12
unbaked.....	6 to 8
Cakes, non-fat	
angel, baked.....	4 to 6
sponge, baked.....	4 to 6
Cookies, baked.....	12
unbaked.....	12
Doughnuts, fried.....	4 to 6
Pie, fruit, unbaked.....	6 to 9
pumpkin, unbaked.....	4 to 6
cream, baked (without meringue).....	1 to 2
Nuts.....	6 to 9

\*These storage times are approximate and are intended only for guides to warn the homemaker to use her frozen foods before they begin to lose quality. The maximum storage life is dependent on many factors including initial quality, types of food, and treatment all along the line. It is not economical to keep most home-frozen foods stored for their maximum storage life.

separation of cream sauces can be prevented by sufficiently rapid freezing.

Keep storage temperatures as even as possible. If the storage temperature fluctuates, the food loses moisture. In the case of vapor-proof containers, the moisture forms ice droplets on the inside of the package.

### Length of Storage

Most homemakers freeze prepared and precooked foods for storage of a few days or at the most a few weeks. Actually some foods may be kept a year.

You will find approximate times for safe storage of foods in the table on page 9. These times are intended for guides only. Under controlled laboratory conditions, a number of the foods have been stored several times the periods given and yet have kept their initial high quality.

It is not advisable, however, to store any frozen food for long periods. In fact, it is economical to use up the foods and refill the freezer often. Furthermore, if you use frozen vegetable and fruit dishes up to the time of their season, you may lose your zest for the fresh food.



### Preparation for the Table

ONCE you take frozen foods from the freezer, prepare them for the table rapidly to prevent loss of high quality. If the food requires thawing before it is heated or served, thaw it in its sealed original container. You can thaw frozen foods in the storage compartment of your refrigerator or outside the refrigerator at room temperature; near a radiator; or in front of a fan. Often the thawing may be done in a low-temperature oven.

When frozen foods must be cooked or reheated, heat them quickly from the *solidly frozen state* in a tightly covered pan, if possible. Allowing foods to thaw and stand after thawing usually results in an inferior product.

More specific directions for preparing frozen foods for the table are given under the various food headings.

## How to Prepare, Freeze, and Serve Frozen Foods

### Soups

Vegetable, split pea, navy bean, black bean, fish, and chicken noodle soups and chowder are successful when frozen. To save storage space freeze soup concentrate rather than soup itself. Then add the frozen soup concentrate to the heated liquid at the time of reheating.

In making vegetable purées be careful not to stir air into them. After you pulp the cooked vegetables, reheat them, without stirring, in the upper part of a double boiler to drive out any air which may have been added during pulping.

Place concentrated soups, or purées for soups, in sturdy packages; or pour the soup between the grids in the ice-cube tray. Cover the tray and freeze. Remove the tray and the frozen blocks of soup. Wrap the blocks of soup, put them in cartons, and place them again in the freezer-cabinet. For serving, add the solidly frozen soup concentrate to hot water or hot milk over direct heat. Stir often. Or heat milk or water and frozen concentrate in the upper part of a double boiler. Soup that has curdled can usually be made smooth by beating. To season soups add salt, pepper, and other seasonings at the time of reheating.

### Meat Stock

Because meat bones are likely to break the wrappings and to take up valuable locker space, you may want to bone meat before you freeze it. Use the leftover bones, some with bits of meat clinging to them and some with marrow in the center, to make soup stocks. First crack the bones; then add cold water and a little salt, and simmer them for from 3 to 4 hours. If you use a pressure cooker, the bones may be cooked for a shorter time, more gelatin will be extracted from them, and the stock will be more concentrated. Marrow from the bones may be cooked with the soup. Follow directions given for packing and freezing soup.

Meat stocks may be used as a basis for many soups.

### Vegetables

*Use only high-quality vegetables of a suitable variety, just mature enough for eating, bright in color, and fresh. Do not use any root vegetables which have been stored for a long time.*

Many cooked vegetables do not freeze successfully. Vegetables tend gradually to lose their fresh green color, aroma, and flavor during cooking. During storage they tend to acquire a stale warmed-over flavor more quickly than do vegetables that have been scalded<sup>1</sup> only, particularly if

<sup>1</sup>Scalding is heating the vegetable either in steam or in boiling water only sufficiently to inactivate the enzymes present. Enzymes are substances naturally present and hasten many changes in the vegetables.

they are not covered with a sauce. Precooked vegetables keep their quality better during freezer-storage if they have been covered with a sauce. Add any butter unmelted.

Vegetable purées, mashed or shredded cooked vegetables, and some special vegetable dishes are successful as frozen foods.

### Purées

Purées<sup>2</sup> usually freeze and store well—probably because the pack can be made solid with very little air in it. Among the vegetables, commercially frozen winter squash has long been popular.

Purées of sweet potatoes, carrots, turnips, beets, peas, pumpkin, spinach, asparagus, Lima beans, and green beans keep their color and flavor well during freezer storage.

When vegetables are cooked, some of the flavor and aroma may be dissolved in the cooking water or evaporated in the steam. Therefore, boil vegetables in very small amounts of water, or steam them, keep the cooking vessel covered, and cook only a short time.

Purée vegetables quickly by mashing them, putting them through a sieve, mill, or colander. Do not beat air into them before packaging. After vegetables are puréed, they may be reheated in the top of a double boiler to drive out any entrapped air.

Cool immediately. A quick way to do this is to set the metal saucepan in a pan of ice water or in running cold water. Separate the purée with a fork or spoon several times during cooling to help speed the process, but be careful not to add more air.

The color and flavor of the yellow vegetables are enhanced by the addition of orange juice or lemon juice or both. Do not add milk or fat before you freeze the cooked vegetables because they may acquire off-flavors during storage. If desired, fat or milk and salt and pepper may be added at the time of reheating. If you want the purée to be fluffy, beat it after you reheat it for serving.

When you package purées place a piece of cellophane or pliofilm, cut to fit snugly on the top of the purée to prevent oxidation changes<sup>3</sup> which may result in off-color, off-flavor, and loss of vitamin C.

### Special Vegetable Dishes

Vegetables such as *succotash* or *Harvard beets*, frozen in their sauce, are fairly successful since the sauce takes the place of the air that would otherwise be packaged with the vegetables and thus protects the vegetable from the air.

*Pan-fried beets* are also successful when frozen. To prepare, shred the peeled raw beets. Add them to boiling water—1 to 2 tablespoons of water

<sup>1</sup>A purée is made by putting the cooked vegetable through a sieve.

<sup>3</sup>Changes due to the reaction of some substance in the food with the oxygen in the air.

and 1 to 2 teaspoons of fat per cup of shredded beets. Cover the pan and simmer for from 5 to 7 minutes. Chill and freeze immediately.

When you prepare *French-fried potatoes* be sure the potatoes you select are suitable for French frying. Some varieties do not freeze well. Do not try to fry and freeze potatoes of poor quality such as those that have been stored over the winter. Cut and scald the potatoes. The color of scalded potatoes after they are fried is lighter than the color of the same potatoes when fried unscalded. You can make a preliminary test, and if the potatoes fry too brown, increase the scalding time for the batch to be frozen. For frying, use a standard recipe and fry the potatoes to a light golden brown in high quality fat. Drain and cool to room temperature immediately, package, and freeze.

To reheat frozen French-fried potatoes spread them out on a baking sheet and place them in a 400°F. oven for 5 or 6 minutes.

*Stuffed baked potatoes* which have been topped with melted cheese may be successfully frozen. If the stuffed baked potatoes are not good before they are frozen, they will not be good after they are frozen. Use mealy high quality potatoes at the time they are at the peak of their quality.

To reheat them spread them out on a shallow pan and place in a 400°F. oven for about 15 minutes.

To freeze *sliced cooked sweet potatoes* dip them in lemon juice or ascorbic acid solution to prevent darkening.

### To Serve

Do not overheat frozen cooked vegetables! Most vegetables which have been scalded and frozen are sufficiently tender by the time they are heated through. Lima beans, which require a longer cooking time than most vegetables, are one of the exceptions. Vegetables frozen in a sauce and puréed vegetables may be reheated over direct heat or in a double boiler.

If you have frozen a purée in a solid block you can shorten heating time by cutting the block into 1-inch cubes with a sharp bladed knife on a board. Separate the pieces of food with a fork or spoon several times during heating. Purées frozen in covered metal trays may be reheated in the oven. Purées frozen in bags may be immersed in boiling water for reheating. Weight the bag down so that it will not float but be careful not to break it. Or, heat puréed vegetables in a covered casserole in a hot oven, without stirring. Mashed potatoes, heated in this manner, have a loose, open texture similar to Duchess potatoes.

Place vegetables such as sweet potato balls on a cooky sheet until they are heated through and the coating is slightly brown.

If squash purée is too wet, stir in one egg per cup of thawed purée and heat to serving temperature in a casserole in the oven.

## Meat and Poultry

### Preparation

Meat cuts may be boned before they are cooked for freezing. No important differences in cooking time, cooking losses, flavor, juiciness, or tenderness between boned and unboned cuts have been found.

Leave meat in large solid pieces whenever possible to prevent a warmed-over flavor and odor, and surface drying. Slice the large pieces just before you serve them.

If meat and poultry are frozen in small pieces, cover them with gravy or sauce to prevent stale flavors and drying. A solid pack is essential to prevent off-flavor.

Older, less tender meat and poultry need simmering or pressure cooking to make them tender and are best frozen as creamed dishes or stews.

In making *meat stews* use your favorite recipe but omit any vegetables which do not freeze successfully after they are cooked. Potatoes, for example, tend to become soft and watery. If milk is part of the stew recipe, omit it until you reheat the stew for serving. You may also wish to postpone any thickening of the gravy until time of reheating.

*Broiled or fried meats and poultry* require such a short time to cook that you save little, if any, time by precooking and freezing them. Besides these meats do not freeze well because they are difficult to pack solidly and they lose crispness and develop a warmed-over flavor when held in freezer storage. Sometimes covering them with gravy or breading them before you freeze them will help to retain flavor.

*Leftover meats and roast chicken or turkey* may be satisfactorily frozen. They should be frozen immediately to prevent their becoming contaminated. Remove the bones to save freezer-storage space. Pack the meat compactly.

*Leftover gravy* should be reheated to keep down contamination, then chilled, packaged, and frozen. You can chill thick gravy quickly by adding frozen stock or water.

Do not stuff birds before freezing. Bread broken into small pieces for dressing presents relatively large surface areas for contamination. The center of the bird is the last portion to be frozen and the last to be thawed and heated. Therefore the stuffing may be held at temperatures suitable for bacterial growth for appreciable times. The center of the mass of dressing may not be heated to a sufficiently high temperature to kill bacteria present by the time the bird is roasted. Furthermore the dressing from a bird that has been stuffed before freezing is usually wet and soggy. The dry dressing absorbs moisture from the bird during freezer-storage. Better stuff the frozen bird just before you place it in the oven.

When you freeze poultry, it is well to take out the fat on the inside that

was around the entrails before they were removed. This fat often becomes rancid more quickly than does the fat under the skin. You can render the fat and freeze it, or just freeze it separately from the poultry.

It is not wise to freeze drippings from roasted fowl for any length of time—particularly turkey fats—as these tend to become rancid. Do not use drippings from roasted turkey in sauces that are to be frozen.

*Beef loaf, ham loaf, liver loaf, chicken loaf, chicken à la king, meat balls, hash, Swiss steak, veal birds, chicken and veal fricassee, poultry sticks, fish sticks, stuffed peppers, and scrapple* may be successfully frozen. The meat balls keep best if covered with a gravy or sauce. For all of these use your favorite recipes, but be careful not to overcook any meat or poultry to be frozen.

### **How to Package**

It is very important to package meats and poultry properly, whether they are raw, or cooked and covered with sauce. When you wrap meats to be frozen dry, be sure you fit the wrapping snugly against the meat. Satisfactory wrappings are moisture-proof cellophane, pliofilm, or polyethylene covered with stockinet. Metal foil also makes an excellent wrap. Be careful that no sharp ends of bones are left in the meat or poultry to break the paper or foil.

### **Length of Storage**

Cooked meat and poultry, when stored for more than 6 to 9 months, particularly if not well wrapped, may become dry and powdery in texture. You will often notice this dryness before you do flavor changes. You may also find that the fat becomes rancid.

### **Preparation for the Table**

Some frozen cooked meats and poultry are excellent served cold either on the dinner plate or in sandwiches. They are usually more moist than if they are reheated and are less likely to have a warmed-over flavor. Be sure to thaw them quickly in the sealed, original package. Meats or poultry packed in a gravy or sauce may be reheated in a double boiler; or immersed in boiling water in the moisture-proof bag in which packed; or in a covered casserole; in a steamer; or if there is no danger of burning, over direct heat. Do not overcook or overstir those meats that tend to become stringy. Before meat or poultry stuffing is completely thawed, place it in a greased casserole. Cover the pan and heat the dressing in the oven (350°F.). Uncover during the last minutes of heating. The dressing in poultry that was roasted and then frozen may taste somewhat uncooked and wet. It is not practical to reheat frozen roasted poultry or meat loaves whole since the time required for the heat to reach the center of the bird or meat loaf is as long as the time required to cook the raw meat.



Sometimes the outer slices of roasts have a stale flavor because of changes on the surface. The trimmed inner portion of the roast, however, may be satisfactory.

If meat loaves become slightly dark and dry, serve them with a gravy or sauce.

### Combination Dishes

**M**ANY combination dishes that contain meat, chicken, spaghetti, or rice are suitable for freezing if they can be reheated without much change in flavor or texture. Meat dishes that are served with a sauce, such as Swiss steak, meat balls with spaghetti, chop suey, chow mein, ravioli, and curried lamb, are satisfactory when frozen after they are cooked. They are fairly easy for the beginner at freezing cooked foods. Be sure that the meat in these dishes is covered with the sauce during freezer-storage and during reheating.

Cooked polished rice may be frozen successfully, but it requires special care in preparation or it may be soft and mushy. Boil it gently in an equal volume, or slightly more, of water in a tightly covered kettle for 10 minutes. Then transfer the rice to a steamer and cook for an additional period of about 25 minutes. The rice should be slightly underdone when you freeze it. To serve, reheat it in a preheated steamer for about 10 minutes depending upon the amount of rice.

Sauces of various types may be frozen separately and used later in combination dishes. Freeze them in a concentrated form and add hot liquid to them at the time of reheating.

### Frozen Plate Meals

**P**LATE meals usually have a meat and two vegetables. For variety and interest you may want to add frozen applesauce, cranberry sauce, spiced cherries, spiced peaches or pears. These can be thawed while you heat the meat and vegetables for serving and may be served, if you wish, in the small waxed cups in which they were frozen.

You may freeze the food on a plate or you may freeze the individual servings of meat and vegetables in the desired shaped molds. Many pre-cooked dishes may be frozen in 2 or 4 portion amounts. Package each item snugly and return it to the freezer. It is difficult to properly wrap food to be frozen on a plate. The uneven shapes of the food often leave many air pockets. A plate of food also occupies more freezer space than the individually wrapped foods.

When the food item, which has been wrapped separately, is to be served, unwrap it and place it on the plate to be reheated. Place any food



covered with a sauce or gravy with the bottom side up so that the sauce or gravy which has settled to the bottom of the mold will run down over the food during thawing.

When you plan meals to be precooked and frozen:

1. Choose a menu with a variety of colors, shapes, textures, and flavors. Make sure that all the foods are of excellent quality.

2. Keep in mind that you will want each of the foods on the plate to be ready for serving at the same time. Therefore, the food items you choose should have about the same reheating time.

3. Remember, too, that the size and shape of your servings will make a difference in the time needed to reheat the food. If you freeze large thick servings of one food and thin small servings of another, the small serving will be dried out by the time the thick serving is heated through.

4. Use the same precautions as you do for freezing any foods, that is, pack foods solidly to keep out air. Some foods you freeze can be covered with sauce to fill the air spaces. Have all utensils clean and handle foods carefully to prevent contamination. Transfer them as little as possible from one container to another. Chill them quickly, package them carefully, freeze them promptly, and reheat them quickly.

5. Be sure when you freeze precooked meals that all the foods in the meal can be stored safely for the same length of time. If one food is more perishable than the others, then use the meal within the safe storage limit of that particular food.

6. When you reheat food in the oven, partially cover it with aluminum foil. Some foods, however, such as fried potatoes and pastry turnovers, should be left completely uncovered or they lose their crispness and become soggy.

## **Salads**

### **Satisfactory Frozen Salads**

The most satisfactory frozen salad is the type that is commonly frozen in the ice trays of a refrigerator. These salads usually have as a base combinations of cream cheese or cottage cheese, whipped cream, or mayonnaise, and often gelatin which improves mayonnaise and whipped cream mixtures. Some of the frozen mixtures may be served as desserts as well as salads.

Probably any of your favorite recipes for salads frozen in the ice-cube tray of your refrigerator will be satisfactory frozen salads stored in your freezer.

Combinations of fresh fruits frozen and then mixed with salad dressing at serving time are satisfactory. If you use fruits which tend to darken, combine them with some citrus fruits to prevent their darkening. Do not freeze raw grapes or raw apples. The grapes tend to become flabby and the

apples pithy. Omit mayonnaise and cooked dressings as they separate during freezing and thawing. Even oil and vinegar dressing is better added at serving time. Omit nuts also as they are likely to discolor and become bitter when frozen in salads.

Meats and poultry for salads may be cooked when plentiful, then thawed, cut up, and mixed with other salad ingredients at serving time.

### **Salads not Satisfactory for Freezing**

Since freezing destroys the crispness and often the flavor and color of raw vegetables, few vegetable salads are suitable for freezing.

Eggs make unsatisfactory frozen salads as the whites of hard-cooked eggs toughen in the freezer.

### **How to Package Frozen Fruit Salads**

Waxed tubular containers with a friction top are convenient for packaging frozen fruit salads. With these cartons you can peel off the paper and slice the salad for serving. Or, you can put the salad mixture in the carton in layers the size of individual servings with two pieces of cellophane between each layer. Then at serving time, you need only separate the sections and remove the paper. You can also freeze salads inside the grids of the ice tray. Be sure to cover the tray before you place it in the freezer. When the salad is solidly frozen, wrap each cube in cellophane and pack in a carton. At serving time, remove as many cubes as you want for each salad plate. Other ways to freeze salads are: (1) as individual servings in waxed paper cups; and (2) packed in covered aluminum trays and cut in desired shape and size at serving time.

It is better not to thaw frozen fruit salads completely before you serve them. Instead let them thaw slightly in the refrigerator.

## **Sandwiches**

### **Preparation and Freezing**

**M**OST kinds of sandwiches, when properly packaged, freeze satisfactorily. They may be closed or open-faced. You can use any variety or thickness of bread.

Sandwich fillings suitable for freezing are meat, poultry, and cheese spreads of all kinds, egg *yolk* mixtures, and nut pastes.

Fillings not suitable for freezing are those with raw vegetables, hard-cooked egg whites, and fruit jellies.

Butter the bread before you spread the slices with the filling. Or, if you prefer, freeze the fillings separately, and make the sandwiches when you want to serve them.

For lunch boxes or for picnics, wrap each sandwich in moisture-proof

cellophane and carefully heat-seal. Place the wrapped sandwich in a box to prevent crushing during freezer storage. Pack sandwiches to be used for teas or buffet meals in rectangular boxes with pieces of waxed paper or cellophane between the layers. Do not make too many layers as the weight of the upper ones may mash the lower ones.

#### **How to Thaw and Serve Frozen Sandwiches**

Thaw sandwiches in their sealed original wrappings. A package of 2 half-sandwiches will thaw at room temperature in from 3 to 3½ hours. Frozen sandwiches packed in the morning in a school lunch will be thawed by lunch time. Tea-size sandwiches require less time for thawing than do full-size ones. The thawing time may be reduced by almost one-half if you place the sandwiches still in the sealed wrapping in front of a fan. The motion of the air may, however, dry out the bread, particularly on the side of the sandwich next to the fan. Serve sandwiches immediately after you thaw them to prevent spoilage. If they are to be toasted, start them toasting while the sandwiches are still partially frozen.

### **Canapés**

**L**IKE standard sandwiches, canapés may be prepared, packaged, frozen, and stored satisfactorily. These tiny morsels take much labor to prepare. For that reason most busy homemakers when they have a quantity of canapés to prepare welcome the idea of making them days or weeks in advance. Moreover, by making canapés ahead of time and freezing them, a homemaker can use a larger variety of fillings or toppings than would otherwise be practical.

### **Fruits**

#### **Sauces**

Most fruits are very satisfactory when made into a sauce and frozen. They can then be used for the same purposes as any freshly-made or canned sauce. Apple, rhubarb, peach, and apricot sauces are particularly successful when frozen. These may be made by stewing, steaming, or baking. They are more nearly sterile if you boil them a few minutes after you add the sugar. Use your favorite recipes but omit any spices until serving time; cloves in particular become strong in flavor during freezer-storage. When you cook berries for freezing, immerse then in boiling sirup (1 cup sugar to 1 cup water) for 15 seconds. Pack all preheated fruits solid without air bubbles.

#### **Purées**

Frozen fruit purées are becoming more and more popular. Some soft fruits can be puréed without any cooking. Among these are blackberries, boysenberries, loganberries, blueberries, avocados, and papaya. Some

homemakers, however, prefer to steam berries before they purée them. The lighter colored fruits such as peaches and apricots darken quickly if the fruit is not heated. Use non-metallic or stainless steel utensils to prevent darkening of the fruit. Heat the fruit to the boiling point with only enough water to keep it from burning. Cool quickly and purée. Some fruit purées are improved by the addition of lemon juice, or a little crystalline ascorbic acid, or powdered citric acid.

### Fruit Juices

Most fruit juices may be frozen satisfactorily. Use only fully ripe, mature fruits.

In preparing *apple juice* choose fully mature apples of tart flavor and crisp, firm texture. The apples must be clean and free of harmful spray residue. Apples may be pressed at home or taken to a cider mill for juicing. The apple juice will be light in color if the apples are cold when pressed.

You can pack the juice raw. But the better way is to heat it first in the upper part of a double boiler over boiling water. Whichever method you use, work quickly and add 1 teaspoonful or more of powdered ascorbic acid to each chilled gallon of juice.

To make *berry juice* for freezing: Sort and wash the berries. Crush them and heat with stirring to 175° to 180°F., or barely to simmering. Do not boil. Drain the heated berries in a large jelly bag or put them through a press. Add sugar to sweeten and dissolve it by stirring.

To make *grape juice* for freezing: Remove the grapes from the stems, wash, crush, and heat them to 165° to 170°F., stirring, until the color is extracted from the skins. Strain and chill rapidly and freeze.

To prevent formation of crystals, thaw the frozen grape juice, then immediately strain it through a jelly bag, package, and refreeze.

In making *rhubarb juice* for freezing, choose red-colored varieties of rhubarb harvested in early spring. Wash the rhubarb and cut each stalk in 3 to 4 pieces. Add one quart of water to 5 pounds of rhubarb and simmer at 175° to 180°F. for 3 to 5 minutes. Press while hot. Dissolve 1/2 cup of sugar in each gallon of juice. Chill rapidly.

To make *tomato juice* for freezing, wash uniformly red, fully ripe tomatoes. Scald in boiling water, chill in cold water, peel, and core. Heat the cored tomatoes to boiling, or simmer for 5 minutes. Press or strain while hot. Chill quickly.

To serve frozen fruit juices, allow them to thaw in the sealed original container. You may wish to use them while some of the ice crystals still remain. Any frozen juice on thawing is likely to be diluted near the top of the container and oversweet near the bottom. Therefore, during or after thawing thoroughly mix the juice before you use it. Add water to taste.

The juices may be served as such or mixed with other juices to make fruit punch, or used in gelatin desserts, in sauces, puddings, whips, milk shakes, fruit ices, and ice creams.

### Baked Apples

Greening, Cortland, Jonathan, Northern Spy, Baldwin, and Rome Beauty varieties of apples freeze well after they are baked. Use fresh, fully mature apples. Bake them sweetened to your taste. Cool quickly and freeze immediately. Thaw them in the sealed original package at room temperature, or reheat them in the oven, or steam them.

### Ice Cream

**F**REEZE only ice cream that is very smooth and creamy. Any ice crystals that are present before the ice cream is put in storage usually increase in size during storage. Commercial ice creams do not as a rule keep their initial high quality in a home freezer for more than a few weeks.

For a smooth product, freeze ice cream, made from your favorite recipe, in an ice cream crank freezer. You may wish to use some of your frozen fruit purées to make "ribbon" or "revel" ice cream. Custard base ice creams freeze well. When the ice cream is frozen transfer it quickly to suitable cartons. A layer of cellophane or pliofilm cut to fit and placed snugly on the top of the ice cream helps to prevent evaporation, crystal formation, and off-flavors. For special occasions put some of the ice cream in individual or large molds.

Before you serve home freezer ice cream, let it stand for a while in either the storage or freezing compartment of the refrigerator.

### Velva Fruit<sup>4</sup>

**V**ELVA fruit is a frozen dessert, velvety in texture, which contains only sweetened fruit purée and gelatin. Use either fresh purée or slightly thawed frozen purée.

#### Velva Fruit

*Yield:* 1 gallon

6 cups purée

1½ to 2 cups sugar (omit if  
sweetened purée is used)

2 tablespoons lemon juice  
(omit if acid fruits are used)

¼ to ½ teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons gelatin

½ cup cold water

<sup>4</sup>Developed at the United States Department of Agriculture Western Regional Research Laboratory.

1. Blend together purée, sugar, lemon juice, and salt.
2. Soak gelatin in cold water for 5 minutes; then dissolve by heating over hot water.
3. When fruit mix is cool, not cold, add gelatin, stirring constantly.
4. Pour mix into ice-cream crank freezer and freeze.
5. Transfer quickly to suitable containers and place in the freezer-cabinet.

## Creamy or Concentrated Fruit Ices

Concentrated fruit ices may be made with as much as half fruit purée.

The following recipes give the amounts of each ingredient to make one quart of fruit ice. You may vary them somewhat to obtain the flavor you desire. Do not use too much apple purée with fruits that have delicate flavors.

### Apple and Strawberry Ice

*Yield: 1 quart*

2½ teaspoons gelatin

1 cup water

¼ cup apple purée

1¾ cups strawberry purée

1 to 1¼ cups sugar (omit if purée is sweetened)

1. Add the gelatin to the water and let stand for 5 minutes. Then heat in the top of a double boiler until the gelatin is dissolved.
2. Mix the purées and sugar.
3. Add the gelatin solution to the fruit.
4. Freeze in a hand freezer or a refrigerator tray.
5. Transfer quickly to suitable containers and place in the freezer-cabinet.

### Other Fruit Ices

*Yield: 1 quart*

*Fifty per cent purée*

2½ teaspoons gelatin

1 cup water

2 cups fruit purée

1 to 1¼ cups sugar  
(omit if purée is sweetened)

*Forty per cent purée*

2½ teaspoons gelatin

1½ cups water

1½ cups fruit purée

1 to 1¼ cups sugar  
(omit if purée is sweetened)

1. Add the gelatin to the water and let stand for 5 minutes. Then heat in the top of a double boiler until the gelatin is dissolved.
2. Mix the purée and sugar.
3. Add the gelatin solution to the fruit.
4. Freeze in a hand freezer or a refrigerator tray.
5. Transfer quickly to suitable containers and place in the freezer-cabinet.

## Box Lunches

**S**ANDWICHES, cookies, and fruit may be packaged in individual servings the night before or even weeks before they are to be used, then frozen and stored. Package each food separately for freezing because some flavors do not blend well. Lunches taken from the freezer at breakfast time will be completely thawed by noon and taste as if freshly made. The fruit or fruit purée will be cold and refreshing. The sandwiches (page 18), cookies (page 28), and fruit (page 19) may taste better than they do when they have been prepared and packed fresh that morning and then kept in a warm locker for several hours.

To give crispness and juiciness to the lunch, add pieces of fresh, raw celery, carrots, turnips, cabbage, or other vegetables. A fresh lettuce leaf wrapped in waxed paper and put in the lunch box, can be added to the sandwich at lunch time. The coolness of the frozen foods in the lunch box helps to keep the fresh vegetables crisp. Frozen purées of vegetables (page 12) may be included. If packed in suitable containers, they may be placed, at lunch time, still covered, in hot water and quickly heated to serving temperature. Cooling the lunch box itself helps to keep the foods cool and fresh-tasting.

## Foods for Special Diets

**F**OODS for diabetics may be prepared and frozen without sugar. Foods for persons on a low fat diet or on a low salt diet may be prepared and frozen at a convenient time. Thus the handicapped person will more likely receive the correct diet and a better variety of food.

## Baby Foods

**P**URÉES for infants and others on low-residue diets may be prepared and frozen when the fruits and vegetables are in season, when their quality is best, and the homemaker has ample time. Freeze the purées in cartons suitable for one feeding or pour the purée between the grids in the ice cube tray. After freezing, remove the blocks of purée, wrap them individually, place in cartons, and return to the freezer. At feeding time, remove only the number of blocks of purée needed.

## Quick Breads

### Frozen Baked

Quick breads may be frozen before or after they are baked, but the quality is likely to be more predictable if they are frozen after baking.



Frozen unbaked quick breads have a tantalizing aroma as you bake them for serving, but their storage life is shorter, and they may be smaller in volume and less tender.

Waffles may be baked, frozen, and reheated in a toaster for serving.

Loaf breads which are hard to slice when hot and are therefore usually served cold, freeze well after they are baked. Bran muffins are also acceptable when cold. Other muffins and all biscuits served piping hot are usually frozen unbaked. The storage life of some batters and doughs is limited to from 2 to 8 weeks.

### **Freezing Batters**

Muffin batter may be frozen in paper cups and the cups placed in muffin tins for baking. Muffins may be baked while solidly frozen but usually have a better volume if you thaw them slightly. Loaf-size batters are likely to be humped and small in volume if you put them in the oven while still frozen. A double-acting baking powder which acts more slowly at room temperature than does a single-acting powder may prove more successful for frozen batter or dough.

### **Baking Powder Biscuits**

Freezing baking powder biscuits does not save the homemaker much time. Furthermore, their storage life is limited to 2 or 3 weeks and the quality may be below standard. Frozen baked biscuits can be split and toasted.

### **Doughnuts**

Doughnuts are satisfactory if frozen after they are fried. Use your favorite recipe and high quality fat. Cool the doughnuts and stack one on another in an air-tight container or wrap them separately in metal foil. Reheat them in a 400°F. oven but do not let them dry out.

## **Yeast Rolls and Bread**

### **Freezing Doughs**

Rolls frozen as dough appeal to the homemaker because she can save some time in their preparation and still have the tantalizing odor of baking rolls at serving time. They may use less fuel than the rolls that are baked, frozen, and then reheated. Frozen doughs, however, often fail. The products may be small in volume, and the crusts dry and tough. The yeast itself may be inactivated by too long freezer-storage, the gluten may have been changed, and there may have been a shift in the bound water. Often the frozen rolls, when placed on baking sheets, increase in size by flattening out rather than by actually rising. Common causes of poor-quality rolls are: poor dough to begin with, too little yeast, poor packag-



ing, too much time between preparation and storage in the freezer, too high a storage temperature, too long storage, and poor thawing and rising conditions. Frozen unbaked rolls have a short storage life.

### **Baked before Freezing**

Baked yeast rolls and bread may be kept successfully in freezer storage. Cool the freshly-baked bread or rolls quickly, package, and freeze immediately. Baked bread thaws very quickly because it contains little moisture.

### **Half-baked Rolls**

Half-baked rolls may be frozen and kept successfully in freezer-storage. Partially bake the rolls in a 275°F. oven for 20 to 30 minutes. The rolls when ready for freezing should be pale and not browned but they should be baked in the center. Cool and wrap the rolls carefully in cartons so that they do not become mashed in freezer-storage.

### **How to Bake Frozen Half-baked Rolls**

Allow the rolls to thaw in the sealed original package for 10 to 15 minutes. Spread them out on a baking sheet. If the surface of the rolls seems dry, grease it lightly before baking. Bake the rolls in a 450° to 475°F. oven until they are heated through and the surface is a delicate brown, about 5 to 10 minutes. If too low an oven temperature is used, the crust of the rolls may be too thick. If the undercrust of the rolls is too moist bake them on a rack instead of on the cooky sheet.

### **How to Serve Frozen Baked Bread and Rolls**

Thaw frozen baked bread in its original wrappings at room temperature. If frozen baked bread is thawed unwrapped, moisture will form on the crust and cause the crust to lose its crispness.

Reheat frozen baked rolls in their sealed wrappings in a 375° to 400°F. oven for about 5 to 10 minutes. Or remove them to a roll warmer or a paper bag and heat them in the oven as you would day-old rolls except for a longer time. Rolls may also be thawed in their sealed wrappings at room temperature for 1 hour, then heated for about 5 minutes in a 375° to 400°F. oven. The reheating freshens the rolls.

## **Cakes**

### **Shortened Cakes**

**S**HORTENED cakes may be frozen either after baking or as batter. There are certain advantages and disadvantages to each method. Cakes frozen after they are baked are less likely to fail, but these cakes may lose

crispness of crust during storage and thawing. This lack of crispness may not be noticeable in a cake that is served plain. If a filling, frosting, or icing is used the contrast usually present between the crisp crust and soft filling, frosting, or icing in a freshly baked cake may be missed.

Cakes made from frozen batter may have a smaller volume than the baked frozen cake but the flavor may be better. When you use frozen batter you have the aroma of the baking cake at the time you serve it. Another advantage of frozen batter is that it takes less storage space in the freezer than does frozen baked cake.

In most respects, however, the advantages of one method over the other are chiefly a matter of convenience.

To make either cake or cake batter for freezing, use your favorite recipes for plain, spiced, chocolate, molasses, or fruit cake.

### **Angel and Sponge Cakes**

Angel and sponge cakes may be frozen after baking. They are too delicate to be successfully frozen as batter. Furthermore, sponge cake batters develop off-flavors readily during freezer storage.

It may be more practical to freeze the egg whites rather than the cake. Frozen egg whites which require no treatment prior to freezing, make excellent angel cakes and take up less storage space than the baked cake.

Sometimes baked angel cakes and sponge cakes shrink somewhat during freezing, particularly if they have not been thoroughly cooled or thoroughly baked. Air enmeshed in the cake contracts somewhat during freezing and allows the delicate framework of the cake to shrink.

Thaw baked angel cakes and sponge cakes in the original wrappings in the refrigerator, or at room temperature.

### **Fruit Cakes**

Frozen fruit cakes are particularly successful for many reasons: the flavor of any cake heavy with fruits becomes blended and mellow during storage, and the cake stays moist because of the fruit and fat present. Also fruit cakes are rather compact and sturdy so are likely not to collapse during freezer storage.

If fruit cakes are frozen as batters, follow the same directions and precautions as for shortened cakes (see above).

Since baked fruit cakes usually improve upon standing, there seems little advantage in freezing them as batter. Furthermore, the long baking still remains to be done. They may be baked, frozen, and stored in oven glassware, or they may be baked in metal pans, removed, cooled, and then wrapped and frozen.

### **How to Freeze Baked Cakes**

1. When the cake is baked, remove it from the pan and cool the cake on a rack to prevent moisture from gathering on the crust.
2. When the cake is cool package it in amounts that can be used at one time. Some frozen baked cakes tend to lose freshness after thawing. A satisfactory method for packaging is to place the baked cake on stiff cardboard for support and then to wrap cake and cardboard in cellophane and heat-seal the package. After the cake is frozen place it in a box to prevent mashing during storage.

### **Cakes Frozen as Batter**

When you freeze cake batter you need to take special care to prevent a loss of the leavening gas and of texture. Batter may be frozen in cartons or in the pan in which it is to be baked. If you use a tin pan line it with waxed paper or metal foil to prevent rusting. Paper cupcake containers are satisfactory.

### **How to Thaw Baked Cakes**

Thaw and heat baked cakes in the sealed original wrappings in a hot oven (375° to 400°F.) for about 10 to 15 minutes depending upon the size of the cake. Frozen cakes usually taste and smell more like fresh ones when they are heated in the oven rather than thawed more slowly at room temperature.

### **How to Thaw and Bake Batters**

Small cupcakes may be baked either before or after thawing. Loaf cake batters that are frozen in a baking pan should be thawed for about 1 hour at room temperature before they are baked. Large unthawed cakes tend to develop humps during baking. Thaw batter frozen in cartons or tubs at room temperature until the batter is just soft enough to put into baking pans. If it is thawed too long in the tubs, the batter may lose some of the leavening gas in transfer. Complete the thawing of the batter in the baking pan.

Layer cakes may be thawed about 30 minutes at room temperature or put in the oven directly from the freezer. Since the batter is shallow it thaws fast enough to be baked without previous thawing. When baked solidly frozen, the cake batter requires a slightly longer baking time.

### **Frostings and Fillings**

**B**AKED layer cakes may be filled and frosted and then frozen. Part of a cake left over, which might otherwise dry out, may also be wrapped and frozen for use later.

Fillings that can be frozen satisfactorily include penuche, fudge, raisin, nut, and apricot. Cream fillings, on the other hand, spoil readily.

Confectioners' sugar frostings, particularly when they contain a good deal of fat, freeze satisfactorily. The fat helps to keep the frosting moist. Frostings of the cooked candy type remain soft and creamy as fillings but when used as frosting may crack and crumble if stored for more than 3 or 4 weeks. Add a small amount of honey or corn sirup to keep the frosting moist. Boiled frostings become frothy and spongy and are therefore not satisfactory.

Cool the cake, the filling, and the frosting to room temperature before assembling, packaging, and freezing.

### **How to Thaw Frosted Cakes**

Thaw frosted and filled cakes in their original, sealed packages in the refrigerator. Some frostings and fillings thawed at room temperature tend to become "grainy." To keep the cellophane from sticking to the frosting, loosen it while the frosting is still solidly frozen. Frozen icings are usually less glossy than are fresh ones. Serve frosted cakes when they are almost thawed, or keep them in the refrigerator until serving time.

## **Steamed Puddings**

**P**REPARE plum pudding and other steamed puddings according to your favorite recipe. They may be made in individual puddings or as large puddings. To reheat the puddings for serving, place them while still frozen, or after thawing, in a steamer and heat to serving temperature.

## **Cookies**

**P**ROBABLY there is less difference in cookies among those freshly baked from frozen dough, those baked before freezing, and strictly fresh ones than in any other class of foods. Use your favorite recipes.

### **Freezing Cooky Doughs**

**Packaging:** You may pack refrigerator cooky doughs in tubular or square packages to slice as round or square cookies. The waxed cardboard butter container is a convenient carton.

Or you may form the dough into a roll of the desired diameter, wrap it in moisture-vapor-proof cellophane, seal, and protect by stockinet. Or wrap the roll in metal foil and freeze.

For packaging drop-cooky doughs, the tub-type container and the glass freezer-jar are convenient. Pack and freeze bar-cooky dough, such as for

brownies, in a tub or carton, then thaw for transfer to the baking pan. Or you may freeze the dough in the baking pan, after wrapping it with moisture-vapor-proof cellophane and heat-sealing.

Thawing and baking: You can slice most refrigerator cookie doughs as soon as you remove them from the freezer, if you use a very sharp knife and a board. If the dough is too hard for slicing, soften it slightly by placing it in the refrigerator for about an hour. Dough thawed at room temperature may be difficult to slice.

Thaw the batter for brownies and similar cookies before baking.

### Freezing Baked Cookies

To package: Thoroughly cool baked cookies before you package them. Crisp ones need special care to prevent breakage and drying. You may package them in a top-opening box, being careful to close out air spaces. Or bake the cookies in sizes to fit a tubular carton. Use pieces of crumpled waxed paper in any air space to keep the cookies from jiggling and breaking. Soft cookies, if stacked, may need waxed paper or cellophane between each two cookies to keep them from sticking together.

To thaw: Since baked refrigerator-cookies and most drop-cookies are thin and thaw rapidly, unwrap them and place them on serving plates as soon as they are removed from the freezer. Or thaw them in the sealed original containers if they tend to lose crispness when removed from the wrappings while still frozen. Thaw baked bar-cookies, which are thicker than most cookies, in their sealed original wrappings.

## Pies

**F**REEZING pies is not a new idea. Our grandmothers baked several weeks' winter supply of mince pies and froze them on the back porch or in the attic; then thawed them out, or reheated them, or baked them as they were needed. Mince pies freeze successfully as do many fruit pies. Meat and chicken pies, frozen in family size or in individual dishes, can be delicious after freezing. Pumpkin pies may be more satisfactory if frozen before they are baked. Freeze them before packaging to avoid spilling. You may wish to package and freeze only the pumpkin purée. Some ground spices—cloves, for example—increase in flavor during freezer-storage. Fruit pie fillings may also be mixed and frozen. Custard pies do not freeze well, either before or after baking. The meringue on cream pies shrinks and toughens. It is better therefore to add it to frozen lemon and chocolate pies just before you heat and serve them.

Pies may be frozen either before or after baking. Pies frozen unbaked are usually preferred. Pies that are frozen unbaked usually have a fresher

aroma and a fresher flavor than do those baked before freezing. Frozen unbaked pies also take less time and fuel than do the frozen baked pies.

A pie that has been frozen after baking is best if thawed and warmed in the oven; when thawed at room temperature and not warmed, the pie is much like a day-old pie.

### **How to Prepare Pies for Freezing**

Use your favorite pastry recipe and any high-quality fat. Do not use excess fat because freezing tenderizes pastry somewhat. Crust for frozen pies may contain 5 to 20 per cent soy flour.

### **Prepare the Filling**

Use any of the following as containers: paper pie plate with a metal rim, enamelware, oven glassware, aluminum, or one of the aluminum pie pans designed for freezing. Line the pan with pastry, put in the filling, and cover it with top crust. Be sure that the top crust does not dip into the filling. Seal the edges well to keep the juice from boiling out during baking. Do not cut vent holes in the top crust before you freeze the pie. These can be cut during the first few minutes of baking. For pies that are to be stored only a short period you may use a floating or a criss-cross crust.

Some fresh fruits require special treatment if they are to be used in frozen unbaked pies. Otherwise, they are likely to lose color and flavor and sometimes texture.

Steam apple slices for 2 to 3 minutes and cool quickly; or dip raw apple slices in ascorbic acid solution ( $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 teaspoon per cup of water).

Peel peaches without scalding. Mix peach slices with 1 tablespoon of lemon juice—try to coat the surface of all of the slices with the juice. Or mix the peach slices with 1 tablespoon of water in which  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of ascorbic acid has been dissolved.

Coat berries or cherries with a mixture of sugar and flour.

Fruit pies, made from frozen fruits, are as good as those made from fresh fruit. Frozen berries usually need no thawing before they are put into the pie shell. Thaw other frozen fruits just enough to spread them in the pie shell. When you make fruit pies from frozen fruit packed in sirup, draw off part of the sirup to prevent excessive juiciness. A pie with a very runny filling is likely to boil over and to have a soggy bottom crust. A moist undercrust does not brown evenly or well.

If you wish, you may drain off the fruit juice, thicken it with flour, cornstarch, or tapioca, and cook until clear. Cool the thickened sirup before you add it to the drained fruit. Do not use so much filling that it runs over during baking.

When you prepare pumpkin or winter squash purées for pie fillings,

choose varieties that are solid and do not contain coarse fiber. Steam or bake the vegetable until just soft enough to put through a sieve. Longer cooking may cause the filling to separate. Omit such seasonings as cloves which become strong during freezer-storage.

Probably the most common fault in frozen pies is a soggy undercrust. You can avoid this difficulty by making deep-dish fruit pies with no undercrust. Probably you can make a satisfactory frozen deep-dish pie from any good recipe for a two-crust pie by omitting the bottom crust and increasing the amount of fruit.

Freeze the pie before or after you package it.

If a pie is to be baked before freezing, prepare and bake it as usual. Cool thoroughly before wrapping and freezing.

Unbaked pie shells may be frozen and later used with various fillings. Unbaked pastry may also be frozen as a flat sheet and used for the topping pie on meat and vegetable pies.

### **How to Package Pies**

A simple way to package pies is to wrap them in a moisture-vapor-resistant wrapping material, using the drug-store wrap. Pies may be wrapped before or after freezing. If you have a pasteboard box of the correct size, place the frozen wrapped pie in it. Stack pies right side up in the freezer.

Pie fillings may be frozen in tubs or in glass jars and used in freshly made pastry.

### **How to Bake Frozen Pies**

Bake frozen pies without thawing. If pies are thawed, the pastry, particularly the undercrust, is likely to become soggy. Cut the vent holes after the pie has been in the oven about 5 minutes.

Preheat the oven and bake the pie at 450°F. for from 15 to 20 minutes; then bake at 375°F. until the pie is golden brown, about 25 minutes. Or bake the pie at a constant temperature of 425°F. until golden brown, about 1 hour. If a fruit pie is baked at too high a temperature, the juice is likely to boil over.

Follow any precautions you have found necessary to insure a well done undercrust in a fresh pie baked in your oven. For example you may place your pie near the bottom of the oven. Or you may place it on a metal cooky sheet that has been preheated. Bake deep-dish pies from the freezer in the same manner as those freshly made except for a slightly longer time.



## Nuts

**N**UT meats of any variety may be packed tightly in moisture-vapor-proof cartons and kept successfully in freezer-storage for several months. Salted nuts of initial high quality may also be stored.

Fresh coconuts may be shredded and kept in freezer storage ready for use. One coconut yields about 2 cups of grated coconut tightly packed. The coconut may be packed plain or mixed with sugar in the proportion of 1 part of sugar to 10 parts of coconut by weight. Press the coconut down and pack it tightly. It has relatively little water and so does not expand much in freezing. With a tight full pack there is usually still enough air entrapped to allow for any expansion that may occur.

Frozen grated coconut may be used in any way in which freshly grated coconut is used. The texture and structure of the coconut are practically unchanged by freezing and thawing. Frozen coconut can also be used in recipes that call for dry coconut, but corrections for the moisture present in the fresh coconut may be needed.

## Miscellaneous

**C**ARAMEL corn and potato chips keep their crispness and flavor well in freezer-storage. Ground spices which often become stale because they are kept in warm cupboards will retain their flavor well in freezer-storage. The initial quality should be high.

Cheese cake should be baked before freezing.



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